

College Bound

ISSUES & TRENDS FOR THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS ADVISOR

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Admissions Watch

AS OF JANUARY 1, the Common Application reported that 1,079,936 distinct first-year applications were filed at 841 of its member institutions, 20 percent more than the 903,553 in 2019-20. Applications from underrepresented minority groups increased by 30 percent and first-generation applications were up 35 percent over 2019-20. For example....

Air Force Applications Take Off. After a steep decline during the COVID era, applications to the Air Force Academy's Class of 2027 skyrocketed. More than 10,000 students applied by the December 31 deadline, a 21 percent increase over last year.

"USAFA was able to conduct and attend more in-person recruiting events for this next class of future leaders," Col. Arthur Primus Jr., director of admissions, told Military.com.

Carnegie Mellon Qatar Admits 31 ED. Carnegie Mellon U. in Qatar admitted 31 Early Decision students to its Class of 2027. More than half are from Qatar, but also come from 10 other nations. Students will study biological sciences, business administration and computer and information systems.

Duke Received Second Highest ED Applications in History. Duke U. in North Carolina received 4,855 Early Decision applications for its Class of 2027, the second highest number in its ED program's history. Duke accepted 16.5 percent of those students, down from 21 percent last year's. The new students include 55 admitted through the QuestBridge National College Match Program. North Carolina, New York, California, Texas and Florida contributed the most students to the new ED group.

Emory Fielded 10 Percent More Early Decision Applications Over Last Year. Emory U. in Georgia saw greater diversity in

the ED I applications it received this year. It received 2,414 Early Decision I applications, about 10 percent more than last year, and admitted 903 of the students.

First-year students have two options of where they will begin their Emory years--at its C. of Arts and Sciences in Atlanta or Oxford C., 38 miles away. It was Emory's original location. As juniors, all Oxford students continue to study on the Atlanta campus.

This school year, Emory's C. of Arts and Sciences accepted 722 ED I students, for an acceptance rate of 31 percent. Emory's Oxford C. admitted 353 students. Another 233 students were admitted to both campuses. Emory also admitted 61 QuestBridge students.

Emory looks for academically impressive students, but that's not all. John Latting, associate provost and dean of admission, told *The Emory Wheel*, "We're just seeing an expansion of students from around the country and the world. We're seeing more diversity from a race and diversity standpoint...and in terms of family backgrounds, socioeconomic status, so it's really a broadening of that base."

Johns Hopkins' ED I Apps Come From 20 Nations. Johns Hopkins U. in Baltimore admitted 533 Early Decision students from 37 states, 20 countries and 2 U.S. territories.

"During high school, 93 percent held part-time jobs, internships or summer jobs; 52 percent were active in the arts and 42 percent were involved in student government or advocacy work," the university said. The remainder of the class will be selected to ED II and Regular Decision.

NYU Hits 120,000 Apps! New York U. attracted nearly 120,000 applications for the Class of 2027, 13 percent more than last year. The pool included 22,000 Early Decision

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Financial Matters

College Costs Soar. According to the Education Data Initiative, tuition and fees at private four-year institutions soared 124.2 percent over the past 20 years, with an annual increase of 6.2 percent. It has outpaced the rate of inflation by 171.5 percent. In 1985, annual tuition was \$5,556 versus today's \$32,769.

Why the explosion in costs? *24/7 Wall Street* quoted economist Beth Akers of the Manhattan Institute, who cited four main drivers: administrative bloat, an "arms race" leading to overbuilding of on-campus amenities, a model dependent on high-wage labor and an increase in subsidized student loans.

Debt Disparity. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, 86 percent of black college students take out federal loans compared to 70 percent of white students. Both are large numbers. Black college graduates leave school with \$25,000 more in debt than the average white student. What is most disturbing is that nearly half of black graduates owed 12.5 percent more than they initially borrowed.

Finally, women are responsible for paying back two-thirds of the nation's \$1.7 trillion student loan debt, according to The Education Trust and the Education Initiative.

Working Students Less Likely To Graduate. Students who work while enrolled in college are about 20 percent less likely to complete their degrees than students who don't work, according to a new study from AERA Open

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ADMISSIONS WATCH

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applications, 14 percent more than last year. Applications were up for all three NYU campuses, in Abu Dhabi, Shanghai and New York City.

“Our admissions team is thrilled that so many have demonstrated their eagerness to join the Violet family,” said Jonathan Williams, associate vice president, undergraduate admissions. “It’s humbling. It is such a privilege to be entrusted with giving these nearly 120,000 applications our attention,”

Penn Draws Most ED Apps in History.

The U. of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia received more than 59,000 applications for the Class of 2027, 4,500 more than for the Class of 2026. Penn also drew more than 8,000 Early Decision applications, the most in school history. Penn did not disclose its acceptance rate, but last year 15.6 percent of ED students were admitted.

In addition, Penn is the seventh Ivy League institution to eliminate its enrollment deposit fee of \$400. Previously, 20 percent of students had the fee waived. “We are intentional in our efforts to create equitable application processes and experiences,” Whitney Soule, dean of admissions, told *The Daily Pennsylvanian*.

Rice Admits 15 Percent of ED Students.

Rice U. in Houston received 2,743 Early Decision applications for Fall 2023, the most in school history, and accepted 417 students or 15.2 percent. International students make up 13 percent of the admitted group and 41 percent are from Texas, Yvonne Romero da Silva, dean of admissions, told *The Rice Thrasher*.

Tufts Attracts Most Diverse Pool in History.

Tufts U. in Massachusetts attracted more than 34,000 applications to its Class of 2027, the most diverse pool in school history. Students of color made up 56 percent of the applicants,

The Community College Story

Tulsa C. C. Enrolls 400 Nursing Students.

Tulsa C. C. in Oklahoma enrolled 400 nursing students this winter. “We are trying to meet the demands of our community and graduate more nurses,” Lisa Gerow, nursing program director, said. “Nurses are working short-staffed all over the place. There are hundreds and hundreds of open positions in our community here in the Tulsa area, within all the different hospitals.”

Iowa C. C. Enrollment Gains.

Enrollment in Iowa’s 15 community colleges increased for the first time since 2010. According to the state’s Dept. of Ed, the schools enrolled fewer full-time students and fewer students who are older than age 24. Online enrollment rose by 4 percent Fall 2022.

In addition, dual enrollment by high school students rose by more than 44 percent. High school students make up 45 percent of students in the state’s community colleges and

account for 29 percent of their credit hours.

N.E. Ohio Community College Enrollment Plunges.

Enrollment at Northeastern Ohio’s four largest community colleges has dramatically declined since 2013, according to *Crain’s Cleveland*. Enrollments at Cuyahoga C.C., Stark State C, Lorain County C.C. and Lakeland C.C. plunged a combined 43.5 percent.

Meanwhile, Kent State U. enrolled the most students in the region, despite a 4.4 percent decline this past fall. Case Western Reserve U. saw its enrollment grow by 1 percent and is now the second largest school in Northeastern Ohio in full-time equivalent enrollment, slightly ahead of Cleveland State U. which ranks number three in the area, despite its 4.7 percent decline.

The U. of Akron ranks fourth in the region, but experienced an 8 percent Fall 2022 enrollment decline. ■

up from last year’s 52 percent.

“It was rewarding to resume our in-person efforts at high schools and college fairs while continuing to maintain our virtual programming that we expanded as a result of the pandemic,” JT Duck, dean of admissions, told *The Tufts Daily*.

Tufts was test-optional for the third year in a row.

Union Attracts New Students with New Majors.

Union C. in Upstate New York received a record 9,400 applications for the Class of 2027, up 11 percent from last year. That includes 600 more Early Action applications than last year. Applications came from every state in the nation, plus 138 countries.

According to Matt Malatesta, vice president for admissions, financial aid and enrollment, Union expects a new first-year class of 570 students.

He noted that new majors in civil and environmental engineering, data analytics, music technology, digital studies, and a financial and actuarial mathematics minor were attracting new students.

Virginia ED Apps Hit Record High.

The U. of Virginia received 55,845 applications for the Class of 2027, 10 percent more than last year, including 4,243 Early Decision apps, a record high. Of the 55,845 apps, 27 percent came in Regular Decision, 65 percent Early Action, 8 percent ED.

African American applications were up 22 percent, Hispanic apps up 19 percent. Asian American apps up 18 percent, international apps were up 20 percent. Out-of-state apps accounted for 73 percent of the pool.

U.Va. made offers to 697 in-state and 341 out-of-state ED students. The C. of Arts and Sciences accepted 832 students. The School of Engineering accepted 141 students. The School of Nursing admitted 25 and its School of Architecture accepted 23, Greg Roberts, dean of admissions, told *The Cavalier Daily*.

Virginia Tech Attracts 47,000-Plus Apps.

Some 47,128 students applied for Fall 2023 at Virginia Tech, 4.4 percent more than last year’s record. Overall, applications to Virginia Tech are up 47 percent since 2018. The applicant pool posted an average 4.06 GPA, the university announced.

“Three record years of first-year applications continue to affirm that the transformational changes made in 2018 have made Virginia Tech a top destination for students,” said Juan Espinoza, associate vice provost for enrollment management and director of undergraduate admissions. ■

Students are Using ChatGPT

According to a survey of 1,000 college students, conducted by intelligent.com, nearly 60 percent of students used ChatGPT on more than half of all assignments and 30 percent of them used it on written assignments. Even if colleges ban ChatGPT, which so far has not been the case, students are using it for personal tasks and it is making its way into their lives.

“Anyone who works in college admissions must familiarize themselves with ChatGPT and begin to grapple with how the tool might enter into student work in the very near future,” wrote Mike Dunn and Chris Horne in *The 74*.

“When asked to write a 500-word essay

suitable for college admission, the computer produced a piece in seconds about a student’s interest in science and technology, work on the high school robotics team and desire to be part of a college community. It was a decent response to a basic prompt.” A more detailed prompt produced a more “well-written, human-authored essay.”

Plagiarism is a serious risk. The authors say, “This is where the conversation among students, teachers, counselors and parents needs to start.... Counselors should also reiterate the importance of students telling their own, original story in their essay and should introduce ChatGPT to students’ family members so they can discuss it at home as well.” ■

What Today's Students Say

Who is Today's Student? According to information released last month by the Lumina Foundation, 37 percent of today's college students are 25 years or older and 42 percent are students of color. Some 46 percent are first in their families to go to college, 9 percent are first-generation immigrants and 6 percent have served in the U.S. armed forces.

About 64 percent of today's college students work, and about 40 percent of them work full-time. Almost half of college students are financially independent of their parents. An alarming 36 percent of students report not knowing where the next meal is coming from, while 9 percent lacked stable housing within the past year.

Almost a third, 31 percent, come from families at or below the federal poverty line, while 53 percent come from families earning twice the poverty rate. Some 60 percent of ninth graders from high-income families are more likely than students from low-income families to get an education after high school. But only 11 percent of young adults from low-income families earn bachelor's degrees by age 24, compared to 58 percent from high-income families.

Students Feel Unprepared. According to YouScience's survey of 500 recent high school graduates, 75 percent do not "feel prepared to make college or career decisions after [high school] graduation." About 41 percent felt unprepared to make a career choice or declare a college major. Furthermore, 30 percent were not following any planned educational or career path. For 57 percent of the graduates, family and friends had the greatest impact on their college and career decision-making. For more info, see, www.youscience.com.

Students Feel College Worth Their Efforts. The "Fall 2022 Digital Learning Pulse Survey" of 1,200 faculty and administrators and more than 2,350 students at 1,200 institutions across the nation found that 47 percent of students, 37 percent of administrators and 41 percent of faculty strongly believe that the cost of college has become financially unfeasible.

Nonetheless, three quarters of two-year students and two-thirds of four-year students give the education they receive an "A" or "B," despite price.

Nearly 90 percent of academic administrators expressed concern about future enrollments, with 47 percent of two-year college administrators "very concerned" about future enrollments.

Students are Sad. A recent survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 45 percent of high school students were so persistently sad or hopeless in 2021 that they stopped engaging in their usual activities.

Another survey by Brainly found that 67 percent of students surveyed believe they will need a mental health break in 2023 due to their school workload.

Students Gambling with their Financial Aid. According to intelligent.com, approximately one-in-six college students report gambling with their financial aid or student loan money. Perhaps what is worse, about one quarter of these students report that their colleges are promoting sports betting with on-campus sports advertising and promo codes.

Some students say they are eating less or running up their credit card bills to support their betting habit, while others are taking fewer classes to keep money so they can bet, and are delaying payment of bills.

According to the intelligent.com's survey of 1,000 students, 50 percent say they have gambled at least once in school. Of this group, 15 percent say they gamble every day, 19 percent gamble a few times a week, 21 percent gamble at least once a week. Some 60 percent of college gamblers are underage and illegally use other people's identifications to place bets. In addition, 31 percent of college gamblers have used credit cards and money from their parents to gamble.

CollegeGambling.org, which counsels individuals with gambling problems, claims more than three-fourths of students bet on the lottery, casino games, sports and bingo.

Students Regret Majors? According to ZipRecruiter, about 44 percent of college graduates it surveyed regret the college major that they chose. Moreover, a recent article in *Business Insider* warned that career coaches and counselors say that certain degrees are poor choices for students hoping to land a stable, high-paying job. These include acting, film, communications, English, psychology, philosophy, history, anthropology, interior design, photography and even marketing.

It is worth noting that for years, other surveys showed that many corporate CEOs gained critical thinking skills and a useful, broad perspective by studying some of these Liberal Arts majors. Before colleges and universities took on vocational training, many of these majors were at the heart of a college education. ■

COUNSELOR'S BOOKSHELF

Thinking Critically in College: The Essential Handbook for Student Success by Louis E. Newman (former dean of academic advising and associate vice provost for undergraduate education at Stanford University); Radius Book Group; ISBN-10: 1635767954; \$21.99.

The Black Family's Guide to College Admissions: A Conversation about Education, Parenting and Race by Timothy L. Fields; Johns Hopkins University Press; ISBN-13: 978-142-1444895; 224 pages; \$21.95; paperback.

An Introduction to Black Studies by Eric R. Jackson; University Press of Kentucky; ISBN: 978-0-8131-9691-6; 296 pages; \$35.

It covers eight disciplines of black studies: history, sociology, psychology, religion, feminism, education, political science and the arts.

Top Admissions Books for 2023? *Forbes* contributor Brennan Barnard put these among other books at the top of his list (many of which have appeared in *CB's* "Counselor's Bookshelf").

College Essay Essentials by Ethan Sawyer; *The College Finder* by Stephen R. Antonoff; *Colleges that Change Lives* by Lauren Pope; *The Debt Trap: How Student Loans Became a National Catastrophe* by Josh Mitchell;

The Fiske Guide to Colleges (by long-time *CB* friend Edward B. Fiske); *The Price You Pay for College; An Entirely New Road Map for the Biggest Financial Decision Your Family Will Ever Make* by Ron Lieber; *The Truth About College Admissions: A Family Guide to Getting In and Staying Together* by Brennan Barnard and Rick Clark; *Where You Go is Not Who You'll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania* by Frank Bruni. ■

FINANCIAL MATTERS

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(American Educational Research Association). The data was gathered from 2001 to 2017 for the state of Tennessee.

Working students signed up for about one less credit on average per semester than students who don't work. Therefore, their progress through college was slower and they were less likely to graduate. Currently, about 43 percent of full-time students and 81 percent of part-time students work while enrolled in college.

Loan Forgiveness Update. Twenty-six million people have already applied for, or automatically qualified for, elimination of part or all of their student debt under the plan proposed last year by President Biden. The Dept. of Ed fully approved 16 million of those applications and sent them to loan services before lawsuits were filed and those activities halted.

The constitutionality of the program will be

Local Financial News

Hawaii Freezes Tuition. The Hawaii Board of Regents voted to freeze tuition for the next two years, according to the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*. Then resident tuition will increase over the next two years by 2 percent at UH Hilo, UH Manoa and UH West Oahu through the 2026-27 academic year.

Nonresident tuition will increase those two academic years as well by the same amount. Community college and graduate student tuition will remain frozen for all four years. Full-time tuition for residents at UH Manoa, for example, is \$5,652 per semester.

Hood Advantage. Hood C. in Maryland, a liberal arts school offering 30 bachelor degrees, four pre-professional programs and 19 master's degrees, announced the Hood Advantage Program that fully covers tuition for Maryland students with economic needs.

It will pay last dollar tuition expenses after federal aid. Located near Washington D.C. and the I-270 technology corridor, Hood sponsors "countless internships and research opportunities." Hood president Andrea Chapdelaine said, "We know this program will change lives."

Wittenberg Extends Tuition Free For Ohio Transfers. Wittenberg C. in Ohio extended its new Tiger Opportunity Grant tuition-free program for eligible Ohio residents to include transfer students. "Expanding this opportunity is in keeping with Wittenberg's long-standing commitment to accessibility and affordability," Michael Frandsen, president, told *Springfield News Sun*. ■

decided by the U.S. Supreme Court later this year. The Biden Administration says 40 million borrowers are eligible for some relief and that 90 percent of these borrowers are already out of college earning less than \$75,000 a year. It published a state-by-state summary of how many students are eligible. See, www.ed.gov.

Money Talks? According to some calculations, an applicant who is connected to a wealthy donor at Harvard is nine times more likely to gain admission than another similar student without connections. At one point, up to 5 percent of Duke's student body owed admission to wealthy connections.

And between 2013 and 2019, a state audit found that the U. of California admitted at least 60 well-connected students who otherwise had "virtually no chance of admission."

Public policy officials should object to these practices, even at private colleges and universities, says Frederick M. Hess, education policy director at the American Enterprise Institute. In a recent opinion piece in *The Hill*, he argued that one reason is that many of these schools "collect a fortune in federal student loans, grants and research funding. It's wholly appropriate for federal lawmakers to insist that public funds not subsidize or support institutions engaged in such behavior." ■

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Queens' Military Commitment. Queens C. in New York City sponsored two days in January during which U.S. military veterans received instant admission for its Spring Semester. It's estimated that 70 percent of Queens' first graduating Class of 1941 served during World War II, and the school maintains a memorial to their service in its campus Quad.

"The veterans and military personnel taking courses here bring an unrivaled level of academic excellence to our institution," said Queens C. president Frank WU. "We take pride in the college consistently being designated as a military-friendly school, and as a military-friendly spouse school, and are committed to providing support to this community through specialized services...."

Northwestern Michigan's Program in Water Technology. Northwestern Michigan C. in Traverse City will offer a two-year program in Water Technology to teach students how to monitor and cleanup water pollution both locally and worldwide. The college's Great Lakes Water Studies Institute offers academic, professional and research services to waterfront communities and government agencies around the country.

College Completion Rates Steady. The National Student Clearinghouse Research Center reported that the six-year college completion rate for the academic year 2021-22 was 62.3 percent, about the same as the previous year's 62.2 percent.

Latinx? Many colleges and universities have adopted the word "Latinx" to describe different genders and members of Latino and Hispanic groups. That practice came under attack by Arkansas Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders, who on her first day in office banned

the word "Latinx" from all state government documents. She further ordered the term to be replaced by "Latino" and/or "Latina" in previous state records.

Sanders cited a Pew Research Center study that found only 3 percent of the U.S. Latino and Hispanic population use "Latinx." The Real Academia Española of Madrid, Spain, also deemed the "x" suffix improper for the Spanish language.

Law Schools Eschew Rankings. Northwestern U.'s Pritzker School of Law is the latest prestigious school to announce it will no longer participate in *U.S. News & World Report's* rankings.

NU was listed at 13th among 192 law schools the magazine ranked for 2022. Harvard Law School, Yale Law School, Georgetown U. Law Center and Stanford Law School already withdrew from the survey.

"The decision by *U.S. News* to devalue employment that is funded by public interest fellowships and to exclude loan forgiveness programs in its debt calculation does not support these efforts by our law school and other law schools to support our students," said Hari Osofsky, Pritzker's dean. Nor does it accurately credit interdisciplinary learning, she added.

Comings & Goings. Oakton Community College in suburban Chicago is now Oakton C.

Holy Names U. in Oakland, California, announced it will close in May due to declining enrollment and increased need for institutional aid. The 154-year-old university formalized an agreement with Dominican U. of California in San Rafael to transfer its students. ■

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